

Cirencester
Rural District Council



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

REGINALD GREEN, M.D., D.Hy., D.P.H.

1941

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GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	83,437
Population (Census 1931)	12,205
and estimated 1941	14,050
Number of inhabited houses (Census 1931)				3,280
(end of 1941)				3,623
Rateable Value	...	...	...	£58,264
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	£265

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

	M.	F.	Total
LIVE BIRTHS (total)	104	114	218
Legitimate	... 96	107	203
Illegitimate	... 8	7	15

Birth Rate (R.G.) 15.4

STILL BIRTHS	...		
Legitimate	... 4	2	6
Illegitimate	... 1	0	1

Rate per 1000 population, 0.42

DEATHS	...	93	82	175
Death Rate (R.G.)	12.4	per 1000		
Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of childbirth...	from sepsis			Nil
	from other causes			1
Deaths of Infants under one year of age :	11			
„	per 1000 births :	50		
Legitimate,	44 ;	Illegitimate,	66.	
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...		Nil
„	Whooping Cough	...	...	Nil
„	Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)			Nil
„	Cancer	...	...	30

BIRTHS

The births registered in the district were for the year 159, and of these 75 were males and 84 females. The number received from the Registrar General, which includes the births of children who were born outside the area, but whose parents lived in it was 218, and includes 104 males and 114 females. This number excludes all children of non-residents who were born in the area. The number of births per quarter were very equal, except in the third quarter, when the number was 10 less. Of the outside births, 25 were born at the Tetbury Maternity Home, compared with 23 in 1940. The birth rate (R.G.) worked out at 15.4 per 1000 population, the rate in England and Wales being 14.2. The local rate in 1940 was 15.0. The birth rate for the previous 5 years averaged 14.2 per 1000. Nine illegitimate births were reported, whilst in 1940 the number was 11. Five of these births were registered in the first quarter. In 1939 there were 14 infants born out of wedlock. Six still births were reported, a rate of 0.42 per 1000, as to 0.46 in 1940, and 0.51 in England and Wales, per 1000 population.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN 1941.

(REG. GENERAL)

DISEASE				Males	Females
Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	...	...	—	—
Diphtheria	...	...	...	—	3
Influenza	...	...	...	1	—
Respiratory Tuberculosis	...	...	...	2	1
Maternal Causes	...	...	...	—	1
Cancer	...	...	...	19	11
Diabetes	...	...	...	1	3
Cerebral Haemorrhage	...	...	...	5	13
Heart Disease	...	...	...	20	13
Other Circulatory Diseases	...	...	...	—	3
Bronchitis	...	...	...	2	3
Pneumonia	...	...	...	6	5
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	2	1
Peptic Ulcer	...	...	...	2	—
Appendicitis	...	...	...	3	—
Digestive Diseases	...	...	...	2	3
Nephritis	...	...	...	2	2
Congenital Causes, etc.	...	...	...	3	—
Senility	...	...	...	11	17
Suicide	...	...	...	1	—
Other Violence	...	...	...	5	2
Other defined Diseases	...	...	...	6	1
All causes	...	...	...	93	82

DEATHS

Deaths certified in the district occurred in 18 parishes, there being 39 in Fairford, 20 in Lechlade, 14 in South Cerney and 10 in the Ampneys.

In three parishes there were 8 deaths each, North Cerney, Kemble and Sapperton; in 4 parishes from 5-8 deaths, and in 6 there were 3-4 deaths.

Of the 51 deaths of residents that took place outside the area, 22 were from the P.A. Infirmary, 10 from the Memorial Hospital in Cirencester, and 6 from the Radcliffe Infirmary at Oxford. Of the 27 deaths of non-residents certified in this area, 15 were connected with transport on road or air.

The annual deaths on the list of the Registrar General were 175, including 93 males and 82 females.

The number received from local registers, including quarterly figures was 180, of which 97 were males and 83 females.

The death rate (R.G.) was 12.4 per 1000 population, and compares with 12.18 in 1940, and 12.9 in England and Wales. For the preceding 6 years the death rate averaged 12.7 per 1000, in one year being over 14.

Deaths at age periods: 0-1 year, 11. 1-15 years, 6. 15-45 years, 15. 45-65 years, 36, and 65 upwards, 112.

CAUSES OF DEATH.—Influenza only one death. Tuberculosis of lungs 3 deaths, nil from the disease in other organs. Increased number of deaths from Cancer 30 in all, compared with a 6 years average of 21, the number being 25 in 1940. There is no doubt but that the death rate from Cancer is increasing, although much more is being done for it in these days. Hospital provision, for late cases more especially,

should be provided, in addition to the public assistance institutions, which do very useful work. There were 18 deaths from apoplexy, an average number. The deaths from heart disease were 33, 2 less than in 1940, and 6 deaths were due to circulatory trouble. Bronchitis caused 5 deaths, and pneumonia 11 deaths, the latter averaging 6 only for the last 6 years. More than half the pneumonia deaths were at ages under 1 year. Two deaths were caused by peptic ulcer, all of males. Appendicitis caused the death of 3 males, the same as in 1940. Four deaths were caused by diabetes, 3 of females, there were no deaths in 1940. There were only 4 deaths from nephritis or kidney disease, there being 7 in 1940. Old age was certified in 28 cases, there being 21 in 1940. They were all aged 65 years upwards. There was one suicide death and 5 from injuries.

INFANT MORTALITY

Eleven deaths of children under one year were certified, 7 males and 4 females, equal to an annual death rate of 50 per 1000 live births. The rate in 1940 was 46, and in England and Wales 59 this year. The rate in 1940 would have been 60 per 1000 if one had used the number of births registered in the rural district, and not that supplied by the registrar-general. For the previous six years the rate averaged 39 per 1000.

The current death rate for males was 67, and for females 35, per 1000 live births.

No less than 7 were preventable diseases, 6 from pneumonia and 1 from bronchitis. These diseases are picked up from the older members of the family, who pass on colds to the infants, and these not receiving the necessary attention and nursing, go on to

acute pneumonia. It is for this reason that the admission of young children to hospital with this disease has been advised so strongly.

Although pneumonia has been notifiable for many years, little has been done by Councils to reduce the mortality. The modern drug treatment of this disease is lowering the death rate in a remarkable fashion.

Three infant deaths were due to congenital weakness and premature birth. Two infants died at ages under 1 week, 4 under 1 month, 5 under 3 months, and no less than six at ages of 3 to 6 months.

Most of the births were visited periodically by the local district nurses, who attended the birth of a majority of the infants.

The child welfare centres again dealt with a large number of infants, and gave advice to young mothers on how to bring up their progeny.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

DISEASE		Total Cases Notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Small Pox	...	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	...	24	21	—
Diphtheria	...	25	25	—
Pertussis	...	11	11	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	1	—	—
Pneumonia	...	24	8	11
Other diseases generally notifiable—Erysipelas		3	1	—
Other diseases notifiable:				
Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	5	5	—
Measles	...	155	47	—
Polio Myelitis	...	—	—	—
B. Abortus	...	1	—	—

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Scarlet fever was less prevalent than in 1940, there being 24 cases notified as against 41. During the last 6 years the average was 18 per annum, most of the cases occurring in 1935 and 1940. The present number includes 11 males and 13 females, 12 being school age, and 8 adults. Out of the total 21 were treated in hospital.

As to parishes, 9 occurred in Kemble, 5 in Fairford, and 4 in South Cerney.

In one family there were 4 cases, and in two other families in the same parish there were 2 cases. In one family the mother and brother were infected by another child, a convalescent, returning from treatment in Bath. Two cases were apparently infected in the urban hospital, but the source of infection was not found.

After many years with very few cases, an average of 2 per annum over the previous 6 years, there were 25 cases of diphtheria reported, including 10 males and 15 females. Eleven of these were of school age, 2 below it, and 12 adults. Six came from Fairford district and from North Cerney, 5 from South Cerney, and 3 from Duntisbourne.

There was a small epidemic in the latter place, and all the school and pre-school children in the parish were swabbed. Several children and one teacher were found to be carriers, and most were treated in hospital. In addition a number of adults were also swabbed, and one girl proved positive, and was also isolated. No further cases occurred in this outbreak.

Two men from a local aerodrome were notified. A man came to South Cerney on leave and was taken ill and attended by the military doctor and removed to their hospital. The patient died, but the case was

not diagnosed as diphtheria for some days. Connected with this case were several cases reported as diphtheria, one from the home, and two others who were relations and who lived in other parishes. Three other cases occurred in the village about the same time. The disease was rather prevalent in North Cerney, 6 school children and 3 adults being notified. The village school at Whelford had 3 cases reported, and the school children were all swabbed. Swabbings were also carried out at North Cerney and South Cerney and the "carriers" dealt with. Three deaths occurred, one aged 3 years, and two girls of 10 and 13 years. Two of the deaths occurred in one small parish. All the patients were treated at the joint isolation hospital.

There were notified 24 cases of primary pneumonia, 11 males and 13 females. This includes 19 adults, 2 school children, and 2 infants aged less than a year. There were 8 cases reported from a local aerodrome. The average cases reported during six years were 10 per annum, and the deaths were 6 per year. There were certified 6 deaths from pneumonia at ages less than one year, but three of these were from hospitals in two towns outside the district, and were not notified in this area.

It is to be hoped that in future cases of severe infantile pneumonia will be treated at the Baunton hospital, as will other infectious diseases, not usually admitted to the Joint Hospital. The average number of cases of pneumonia that occur in the district probably averages 60 per annum, so that only the fatal cases are usually reported, it would seem.

There were three cases of erysipelas, all adults. Only one case of puerperal pyrexia occurred. Five cases of cerebro-spinal fever were reported, all soldiers from camps in the area. They were all treated at military hospitals, and all, so far as is known, recovered.

Only 155 cases of measles were notified, as against 528 in 1940. At school age there were 83 cases, under that age 52, and 20 adults reported. In Fairford district there were 70 cases, in North Cerney 28, Ampney 18, and 13 in South Cerney.

The cases of measles reported from the schools were 155, the same as the number notified by the medical men, which is unexpected. Leaflets by the hundred were again distributed among the infected families, as during the last year, and the same applies to whooping cough. No death has been due to measles for many years in this district, and there were about 800 cases in these last two years. Owing to education on health matters by leaflets and papers, there is no doubt but that parents are much more careful in their treatment of infectious and other diseases. Only 11 cases of whooping cough were notified by the doctors, whereas no less than 124 were returned by the schools. This remarkable discrepancy can be partly explained in two ways. Head teachers are asked when several cases occur in a class to exclude all children with coughs, and many of these turn out to be due to colds. All these cases are returned as whooping cough at the time, and are naturally included in the lists. Another important factor is that two doctors apparently did not know that this disease was notifiable until written about cases missed. One other doctor had forgotten that it was to be notified, although he had reported cases in the past. Five cases were reported at ages under 5 years, 5 at school age, and there was one adult case. In Fairford area there were 6 cases notified. No death was certified as due to this complaint, for which credit must go to the help of district nurses, and to the leaflets of advice that were distributed for all the school cases.

Chicken Pox was epidemic in some schools, and usually all the younger scholars took it. About 150 cases occurred in the schools. There were 38 cases

of Mumps, also in the schools. Both these diseases are usually very mild and probably many of them are not detected, but attend school all the time.

Epidemic jaundice was present in a few schools, there being 16 cases reported. This disease is not very infectious, but owing to the long incubation period, sometimes up to six weeks, it stays in a school for some months. Of skin diseases, ringworm occurred in 15 instances, impetigo in 48, and scabies in 17 cases.

More attention is now being paid to scabies, which is often brought home by soldiers on leave. All cases reported by the schools are visited and it is seen that they are properly treated, and the bedding and under clothing disinfected in some way.

BAUNTON MILL HOSPITAL

This hospital for evaucees suffering from the minor infectious diseases, was opened near the end of 1940. During 1941 there were 166 patients admitted, including 42 cases of chicken pox, 84 of measles, 35 of whooping cough and 1 of mumps. From this area there were 88 cases treated, in the Urban 68, and there were 6 from Northleach. Six patients were admitted from outside districts.

TUBERCULOSIS

Four recent cases were notified, one a lung case, and three of the disease in other parts.

In addition, two old cases of pulmonary disease were reported, both evacuees, and they both left the area. Three patients were treated in institutions. Although only one lung case was reported, there were three deaths from this form of tubercle.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

Very good work was done by the county medical staff during the year in the injecting of 2071 children, out of a total estimated child population of 3,300. The 5-15 children inoculated were 84%, and aged 1-5 years the number was equal to 32% only.

The campaign is being pressed on during 1942, more especially to the under fives. At least 2000 leaflets were distributed throughout the schools, and welfare centres. It is hoped to have at least 75-80% of the pre-school children, and well on to 100% of those of school ages.

The Ministry are now advising that the amount of injection should be increased 50% to ensure perfect protection. The head teachers have done all that was possible to have all the school children, and as many of the younger ones as possible, inoculated.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES

The sanitary staff is the same as in former reports. There is no change in the numerous activities of the County Council in the area. They still deal with the medical inspection and treatment of school children, tuberculosis, venereal disease treatment, infant welfare, and orthopaedic work. All births are notified to them.

There are four institutions that deal with evacuees, Baunton Mill, in this area, the two sick bays, and the "bed wetters" hostel in the urban area; all take patients from the surrounding district.

WATER SUPPLY

The water supplies in the area are much as before, but a small main was laid from the urban supply to a camp in the vicinity. At the request of the Ministry, chlorination plants have been installed in the four council supplies and are working very well. The private supply of water to the Fairford Park has been improved, but the town branch of supply is still unsatisfactory both as to quantity and quality. An inspection was made of the supply by officials of the Ministry but no report has been received from them. Ten samples of water from the council's supplies were examined by the County Analyst, and of these 8 were good, and 2 doubtful. In regard to private water supplies, 30 samples were tested, and of these 18 were good, one unfit, and 11 of doubtful quality. Every effort was made to improve the unfit and doubtful water supplies.

SEWERAGE

Nothing new in the drainage department was reported. Work was carried out at the outfalls of the sewage works in four districts for the prevention of any river pollution connected with the Thames.

REFUSE COLLECTION

This is now carried out in proper vehicles owned by the contractor. Collections vary from weekly to monthly, depending on the urban or rural conditions. Six parishes, all very rural, are not scavenged under the scheme. The county rat officer visits the tips at reasoable intervals.

SALVAGE

During the year the refuse contractors also collected the salvage as ordered by the government. This is shown below.

Paper	...	88 tons
Iron	...	38 „
Rags	...	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ „
Bones	...	9 „

This seems well above the amount collected in the previous year, and is a credit to the surveyor and the contractors.

SANITARY INSPECTION

(a) Inspections made under Public Health Act	...	2205
(b) Nuisances discovered or reported	...	78
(c) Complaints received	...	121
(d) Informal or preliminary notices sent	...	19
(e) Statutory notices sent	...	2
(f) Nuisances abated	...	75
(g) Summonses issued	...	—
(h) Convictions obtained	...	—

Summary of works carried out and visits made :

New connections to Council's water mains	...	3
Infectious disease visits	...	49
Houses disinfected	...	77
Housing inspections	...	137
Houses repaired	...	186
Inspection of water supplies, mains, etc.	...	240
„ refuse disposal tips	...	198
„ sewage disposal works	...	198
„ factories	...	76
„ bakehouses	...	9
„ cowsheds and dairies	...	82
„ food shops	...	153
Repairs	...	63
Work in progress	...	255
New buildings	...	199
Miscellaneous	...	199

The inspections made were 2205, compared with 2401 in 1940. There were discovered 78 nuisances, and 121 complaints were received. Nineteen informal notices, and two statutory notices were sent out. There were 75 nuisances abated, no summons being necessary. In connection with infectious diseases 49 visits were paid, and 77 houses were disinfected. Repaired houses were 186. Inspections of water supply and refuse tips and sewage works entailed 636 visits, 255 to works in progress, and 199 to new buildings.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS

These places were visited on 76 occasions, and 9 visits paid to the bakehouses. The conditions were satisfactory.

HOUSING

COUNCIL HOUSES

The total number of houses now owned by the Council is 262, and they are situated as follows:—

Ampney Crucis	...	...	6
Coates	...	...	18
Down Ampney	...	...	2
Fairford	...	...	44
Kemble	...	...	24
Kempsford	...	...	22
Lechlade	...	...	22
North Cerney	...	...	12
Poulton	...	..	4
Quenington	...	...	20
Rodmarton	...	...	16
Siddington	...	...	14
Somerford Keynes	...	...	8
South Cerney	...	...	40
Ewen	...	...	4
Poole Keynes	...	...	6

During the year one house was built by private enterprise, and 10 council houses were completed, 4 in Ewen, and 6 in Poole Keynes. There are now 262 council houses in the area. Five houses were repaired.

The 10 houses completed by the council finishes the scheme embarked upon in 1938 for the provision of 46 houses. Under the scheme of the council 32 damaged houses were made habitable, five being permanently repaired. One structure erected without the council's consent was removed on demand of the council.

NEW BUILDINGS

The following is a summary of plans submitted and new buildings erected during the year :—

1. Number of new dwellings erected by private enterprise	1
2. Number of new Council Houses erected	... 10
3. Alterations and additions to existing houses	... 5
4. New garages	... 1
5. New cowsheds and improved cowsheds	... 2
6. New dairies and improved dairies	... —
7. Drainage improvements to existing houses	... 7
8. Miscellaneous	... 8

INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES

There were 67 houses inspected under the Housing Acts, 137 visits being paid to them. None of these were entered on the housing register. None were returned as unfit for human habitation, but 26 were found to be not in all respects habitable. All these houses were made fit by the owners, without the serving of official notices. One notice of unfitness was

served by the council, and one house was repaired by them. In addition, one house was repaired by the owner. Under the Public Health Act, 3 notices were served requiring defects to be put right. All of the three were complied with. No demolition orders were made, and no houses were demolished. There are no underground rooms in the district, and no Closing Orders necessary.

1. INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

(a)	1	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects [under Public Health or Housing Acts]	...	...	...	67
	2	Number of inspections made	...	...	...	137
(b)	1	Number of dwelling-houses included under sub-section (1) above, which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations, 1925 and 1937	...	...	...	—
	2	Number of inspections made	...	...	...	—
(c)		Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	Nil
(d)		Number of dwelling-houses [exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head] found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	26

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or its officers	26
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3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS.

(a)	<i>Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.</i>				
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	...	...	1

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices—				
(1)	By Owners	...	...	1
(2)	By Local Authority	...	...	1
(b) <i>Proceedings under Public Health Acts.</i>				
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied			3
	
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice —			
(a)	By Owners	...	...	3
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners			Nil

OVERCROWDING

No action was found necessary to abate crowding. A number of evacuees have returned to their home towns, which has relieved the former pressure.

MILK SUPPLY

Number of farms on the register	...	201
Number of farms inspected	...	74
Total number of inspections	...	82

There were 201 farms on the register, 2 more than in 1940. Of these 74 were inspected, there being 82 inspections in all. Two new cowsheds were erected.

War conditions, including shortness of labour, and the employment of untrained dairy workers, with the black-out, has made conditions difficult for the milk producer. Fuel difficulties are also in the way of clean milk production. Whether the average milk is microbically clean or not is a moot question, as routine samples for bacterial count are not taken

in the area by the council, but many are taken by the county returning officials in regard to the 'accredited' farms, and to those providing tubercular free milk. It seems a pity that all the milk farms are not in the "accredited" class. It is a well known fact that many cases of human tuberculosis, especially in children, are due to drinking infected milk.

FOOD SUPERVISION

No meat is killed in the area, or has been since the war started. The inspection of slaughter houses has naturally not been carried out. Food shops, and places where food is prepared, have been inspected, 153 visits having been paid.

